

poor to be by any eminent artist. I have since learned the truth, and found Kaulbach ashamed of his portion of them: he has abandoned fresco. Exhibition of modern pictures (Art-Union) open; great deal of cleverness, but not even an attempt, above landscape and domestic scenes. Surprised to find a total absence of that imitation of the early Italian tempera painters, that ethereal quaintness, which I had understood the German artists of Munich to be remarkable for.

1st.—Went to the Pinacotheca. The building, which is a fine, large, well-proportioned edifice, standing alone outside the town, inspired me with feelings of respect for the king or country who thought so worthily of the art. It is entirely consecrated to works by old masters; but the splendour of the building increases the astonishment and disappointment experienced, on contemplation of an overwhelming number of bad and mediocre pictures in the collection, out of all proportion to the very few fine ones. The injudicious arrangement of these bright exceptions in regard to their perspective; the great importance attached to the works of Rubens, beyond all others, in a town where colouring is so little understood, and especially for numerous sketches quite unworthy the reputation of the artist, and disgraceful to those who placed them there; the entire want of arrangement of the different schools, as illustrative of the progress of art; the various instances of many daubs by the same hand, when one only as an illustration of the state of art might have been, and on that pretext alone, excusable, enforced on my mind a sad truth in regard to the taste of a court so renowned for its munificence. I felt it immediately influence me in reference to the tone and capacity of the artists about the court. If the object of a national gallery of pictures is to assist in awaking, and in giving a right direction to the moral perceptions of the people; to supply the student with the principles that led to the greatest achievements in art; to form his taste and excite his emulation, whilst it directs the matured artist, like a finger-post on the direct road which he is to tread,—if these are the objects of a national gallery, this of Munich is a miserable failure. Visited also the Basilica, an unfinished church in the Byzantine style of architecture. The decorations in fresco are by Hessé and his pupils, and represent St. Boniface. They occupy two sides of the building above the columns. The composition of some of the compartments is good; the colouring is poor, sickly, and yet inharmonious; the drawing is seldom true, and never of a high character; there is an attempt at effect of light and shade, and, consequently, the pictures are all flat and ineffective. Some of the medallions, in simple black and white, that intervene between the pictures, are pleasing. The ornamental part is much better than the fresco subjects, though from the choice of faint, sickly colours, the design is nearly lost in the feeble effect. It appears as though the pepper and salt, blue with white, which constitute the national or royal colours, were made imperative to control the taste of every artist. The sickly combination is to be found all through their decorations, not only in public offices and buildings, but even in private residences, and certainly influences their frescoes as far as I have yet seen.

10th.—Visited this morning the Glyptotheca. We were hurried so rapidly through, that little beyond a general notion of the arrangement could be obtained. In that respect it appears to be more satisfactory than the Pinacotheca, more according to historical truth, and in much better taste. The building seemed admirably adapted to its purpose, and the coup d'œil of some of the rooms, was quite in accordance with the tone of thought and feeling excited by the sculpture.

11th.—Rain all the morning. At noon went to the Royal Palace, and saw Schnorr's illustrations of the great national poem. He was working at one of his frescoes. He speaks but little Italian. As fresco painting admits of no delay, he proceeded with his work in my presence. His palettes, of which he had many, were of tin; he worked timidly, but carefully. He appeared to have merely washed in the local colour, and was modelling it thinly out; the appearance of what he had done was poor, opaque, and dirty, particularly the flesh; that of the men a dirty brick-dust, that of the

women chalky; to talk of execution would be a waste of time. The poorest of the modern Roman fresco painters is very superior to the best I have seen in Munich in that material. Whatever the capacity of the artist may be for sentiment, character, and expression, with an little mastery of the material, he cannot paint them. The two compositions, one on either side of the door of the first room, are rather prettily conceived, especially that of the lady with the hawk, resting on the departing knight, but the faces are insipid and ignoble, whilst the drawing is clumsy and incorrect. I see nothing yet in Munich to induce me to think that the Germans understand the principle of fresco painting, except *Rothmann's fine landscape*. At 3 o'clock went to the Royal Palace, to see the decorations of the apartments; had, from a side passage, a good view of the grand staircase; it is a double flight of broad marble steps, terminating in one wide central staircase, with marble balustrades. Three sides are architecturally like the Loggia of Raffaele at the Vatican; the columns are Ionic. Perhaps a more fortunate architectural combination could not have occurred for the display of pictorial talent. A large well-lighted square of noble proportions, with thirteen cupolas, but the painted decorations are so tawdry and trumpery, that they would disgrace a toy-shop, and it claims notice only as an instance of a noble structure destroyed by the bad taste of the decorator; and that at Munich!

After waiting about an hour, we at length entered with the rush. The rapidity with which we were led through so many rooms allowed no opportunity of minute criticism. The impression on my mind at this moment is, that an endless glare of tawdry ornament, in which pepper and salt is mixed with tinsel, pervades every part. Carvatures are disfigured by having their legs and arms painted flesh colour, and their cheeks highly daubed with red; their hair is gilt, and their draperies are blue and white. In Schnorr's enormous battle pieces, I could discover no point of interest, no touching episode; the colouring is very gay, and being in encaustic, the surface is shiny and looks waxy. But this artist and his pupils have much greater power over the encaustic materials, than they have over those of fresco. With the faults of oil-painting, it evidently possesses also its merits, liquidness, depth, and transparency, and I am told that it works freely, and dries so fast, as to allow painting over three or four times a day. But these peculiarities remind me again of the surpassing beauty of Fierone's Correggio under a varnish. Cannot we obtain richness and depth without the glare of reflection? In these encaustics, the waxiness of the surface on every object, horses, clouds, flesh, &c., is very objectionable. As works of art, these battle-pieces evince a decidedly bad taste; they are showy and meretricious in colour, without a particle of that individuality that characterizes the student of nature. I have not seen any of his cartoons. There are, however, two rooms in the palace that pleased me much, from the novelty and taste displayed. Portraits of ladies, friends of the king, in massive gold frames, are placed at equal distances on an ample ground of deep maroon scagliola, with nothing to disturb the striking effect. Among the ladies here represented, are several of the English aristocracy among foreign ballet-dancers. How different is the ball-room from the portrait rooms; instead of the noble simplicity and beauty, it is trumpery to an extraordinary degree. How could Schwanthaler, the eminent sculptor, allow his bassi-relievi to have their faces and hands daubed with red paint, and their draperies disfigured with the eternal pepper and salt blue and white.

The throne-room has an imposing look from the bronze gilt statues in armour around it; and the throne is very fine, and so is the size of the room, but the style of ornament is not in character: it is too trivial for the object of the room, and destroys the grandeur we should expect from the statues. Schnorr's encaustics occupy three large rooms. That in which Schwanthaler's bassi-relievi are painted red, blue, and white (the ball-room), is so spoiled by — Strauss. The throne-room is the work of Schwanthaler. The portrait-rooms, decorated, or arranged by the architect, Steiner. Cornelius has nothing in Munich to compare with his early frescoes at Rome, in the house called the Tiempeto, on the Monte Pincio, where

it is said Salvator Rosa once resided, and next to that occupied at the same period by Claude Lorraine. Those in the Glyptotheca, and his great work, "The Last Judgment," in the Ludwig Kirche, are only remarkable for extreme boldness. Upon the whole, the works executed here, as well as those under royal commission, as those in the annual exhibition, are devoid of the spirituality of Overbeck, and two or three other Germans at Rome. And how inferior to Brunoff, the Russian, who, whilst at Rome, more than rivalled them by his immense but grand figure of Christ in the garden, and his still more admirable Moses amidst the plague of serpents. Let us hope that the patronage of his sovereign will not pale Cornelius's powers, as that of the King of Bavaria has, by directing, neutralized the energies of the German artists.

12th.—From various conversations among them, I find general regret prevail among the artists of Munich. The king's impatience to have his intentions carried out in his lifetime, allows no time to study the subject or composition, none for improvement. For ever at their back, urging speed, they have ceased to reflect and study. Kaulbach alone is not a slave to royal impatience; he follows his own feeling. "The Battle of the Huns" is his lofty production, and very fine; but his extraordinary talent is more peculiarly in humorous satire. "The Renegade Fox" is too witty for royal patronage, but unequalled by living Europe: it will in future ages rank in its way with the graphic characteristics of Hogarth. Sometimes, in favour, he paints for the king, at others, he looks to the people for approbation and remuneration. This would be more extensive if royal patronage was less active.

#### CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM ON ART.

The *Art-Union Journal*, in accordance with the spirit of its endeavours to promote the influence of the fine arts, has lately devoted much of its space to illustrations of ornamental and decorative art. There is no direction in which it is more desirable to extend the ascendancy of taste, than that which tends to beauty of form in articles of common use. The most fortunate epochs in the history of the higher arts, were precisely those in which their influence was reflected upon the arts, which minister to ordinary wants. The same men, who were greatest at the easel or the marble, were likewise eminent in decorative and ornamental art. The legitimate scope of art embraces a wider field than many have hitherto considered; it includes the decoration of rooms, in the walls and ceilings; the designs of furniture, curtains, and carpets; of porcelain, glass, iron-work, indeed of every thing having form or outline. It could hardly have been supposed, with such brilliant examples as the history of art affords, that any modern architect, sculptor, or painter would consider such branches inconsistent with, or derogating from his main pursuit. Yet strange as it may appear, such seems to be the case. Common as it was once for one individual to understand and practise the three branches of high art, in all their subdivisions, there are now none, whose knowledge is so comprehensive, and few, who practise in any degree, ornamental and decorative design. With such views, we cannot but look with pleasure on any attempt in the right direction, especially when the duty is performed, as in the journal above referred to, generally with great ability.

In the matter of any critique, likely to have an influence to a great extent didactic, it is very necessary to guard against any misunderstanding of the writer's opinions. Whether the impression, we have received, be due to the difficulties of explanation in a confined space, and with diagrams in a small scale, or whether the opinions themselves are erroneous, we will not here examine, our object being rather to serve than to injure a journal, in which we see so much to applaud, and which we feel to be a powerful auxiliary in a good cause. The main point then, to which we would direct attention, is, that sufficient distinction, we consider, is not drawn between the enpying of nature, and the adaptation and union of its forms with the graces of art. That Nature though the best school of art, is not the object for servile imitation has been dwelt upon by every writer upon taste, and we need not go